

HALESOWEN AREA COMMITTEE

Thursday 13th January, 2011 at 6.30 p.m.
At Hurst Green Primary School, Narrow Lane, Halesowen

PRESENT

Councillor James (Chairman)
Councillor Burston (Vice Chairman)
Councillors Body, Crumpton, Mrs Dunn, Mrs Faulkner, Hill, Ms Partridge, Taylor, K Turner, Mrs H Turner and J Woodall.

Officers

Area Liaison Officer (Treasurer), Assistant Director of Housing Strategy and Private Sector, (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Assistant Director, Economic Regeneration and Transportation, Head of Economic Regeneration Delivery, Head of Traffic and Transportation, Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety), Environmental Protection Manager, Principal Environmental Health Officer (all Directorate of the Urban Environment), Assistant Director, Quality and Partnership, (Directorate of Children's Services), Area Community Renewal Officer (Directorate of Adult, Community and Housing Services), Interim Assistant Director Law and Governance and Mrs M Johal – (Directorate of Corporate Resources).

Also in Attendance

Inspector Clive Steedman – West Midlands Police
Mr Chris Wood – West Midlands Fire Service
Ms Julie Winpenny – West Midlands Fire Service

Mr Steve Vincent – Head of Community Safety and Partnerships (West Midlands Fire Service) (For agenda Item No 5)
Mr Brian Warwick – Census Manager (For agenda Item No 9)
Mr Phil Higgins and Ms Kay Cullen – West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust (For Agenda Item No 10)
Councillor Steve Waltho (For Agenda Item No 11)

There were approximately 30 members of the public in attendance.

59

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence from the meeting were submitted on behalf of Councillors Ms Nicholls, Mrs Shakespeare and Vickers.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Declarations of personal and prejudicial interests, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, were made by the following Members in respect of the matters indicated:

Councillor Taylor declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 12 (Nimmings Road Area, Shell Corner: Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders) in view of him having an interest in a property in the area covered by the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders.

Councillor K Turner declared a personal and prejudicial interest in respect of Agenda Item No 12 (Nimmings Road Area, Shell Corner: Proposed Traffic Regulation Orders) in view of him having being the Vice-Chairman for Age Concern and that their business premises were located in the area covered by the proposed Traffic Regulation Orders.

Councillor K Turner declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 5 (Emergency Services Issues) in view of him being a Member of the West Midlands Fire Authority.

Councillor Hill declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 15 (Earls High School Foundation – Final Accounts) in view of him being a Governor of the school.

Councillor James declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 15 (Earls High School Foundation – Final Accounts) in view of him being a Governor of the school.

Councillor Mrs Faulkner declared a personal interest in respect of Agenda Item No 11 (Dudley Group of Hospitals Foundation Trust Membership and Organ Donation) in view of her being a Dudley Group of Hospitals Governor on the Council of Governors.

MINUTES

RESOLVED

That the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 10th November, 2010 be approved as a correct record and signed.

PETITIONS

It was reported that no petitions had been received since the last meeting. No petitions were presented at this meeting.

EMERGENCY SERVICES ISSUES

Mr Steve Vincent, West Midlands Fire Service gave a brief presentation promoting and campaigning for the inclusion of sprinklers in schools. It was stated that the case for sprinklers was stronger now because of the fact that schools were still experiencing fires at an alarming rate and mention was made about schools in Wolverhampton and Sandwell that had recently experienced fire damage. It was commented on that the cost of sprinklers was minimal compared to damage caused by fires and it was stated that twenty schools per week suffered from an arson attack disrupting the education of 90,000 children and causing damage costing £100 million.

Mr Vincent indicated that the inclusion of sprinklers should be considered at the design stage of a building project and that if efforts were made to engage with designers and builders at an early stage the costs for installation would be lower.

In concluding the presentation Mr Vincent indicated that further information in the form of a Digital Versatile Disc (DVD) was available if anyone required it.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the presentation on sprinklers be noted.

AREA POLICE AND COMMUNITIES TOGETHER (PACT) ISSUES

A schedule of PACT meetings arranged in the area of the Committee had been included with the agenda for information.

Inspector Clive Steedman reported on the following three police operations:-

Operation Elf – This operation focused on tackling crime in the run up to Christmas. Police had targeted the Town Centre in a bid to reduce crime and keep residents and visitors safe. Due to the success of the operation the same would again be repeated this year.

Operation Advent – Thirty people had been arrested across the borough for varying drug related crimes. Information gathered had exceeded expectations and a total of forty-one warrants had been executed.

Operation Intrusive – The operation would run from January until the end of March and would focus on specific locations across the force, which had previously shown increased crime levels during the first three months of the year and it was reported that Shell Corner would be targeted as part of that operation.

Members thanked the police for their continued efforts and hard work and it was requested that thanks also be passed on to Sergeant Rudge and his team.

RESOLVED

That the information given in the verbal update on policing issues be noted.

65

PUBLIC FORUM

Reference was made to various data and it was stated that as there were over 2500 Yemeni people in Dudley it was suggested that consideration be given to an additional category of “Yemeni” being included on various forms issued by the Council to describe ethnicity.

The Area Liaison Officer undertook to refer the matter to the relevant Officer for consideration.

66

WARD ISSUES

Councillor K Turner

Referred to proposals for waiting restrictions in Hayley Green and it was indicated that an undertaking had been given to the proposals being introduced before Christmas. This had changed to after Christmas and then again changed in that the proposals would be included in the next financial year and an assurance was sought that the waiting restrictions would be introduced in the next financial year.

The Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) Transportation stated that the scheme proposing waiting restrictions in Hayley Green would commence in the next financial year.

67

OFFICE OF NATIONAL STATISTICS 2011 CENSUS

Mr Brian Warwick, Census Area Manager, gave a presentation on the 2011 Census and explained about the process involved. It was reported that from 7th March, 2011 census questionnaires would be sent out to every household in England and Wales and that the completion of the questionnaire was a legal requirement.

Mr Warwick pointed out that at the time of the last Census, Dudley's completion rate was at 98%, which was the best metropolitan result in the country.

In concluding the presentation Mr Warwick informed the meeting that there were leaflets available for anyone that required further information.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the presentation on the 2011 Census, be noted.

68

WEST MIDLANDS AMBULANCE SERVICE NHS TRUST –
CONSULTATION WITH LOCAL AUTHORITY GROUPS

Mr Phil Higgins, Trust Broad Secretary, gave a brief presentation on the West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust and plans for becoming an NHS Foundation Trust. He explained that the Foundation Trust would still very much be part of the National Health Service (NHS) and that all NHS Trusts would need to become a Foundation Trust by 2013.

Mr Higgins explained about the aims of the Trust which included improving clinical quality and patient safety, introducing NHS pathways, being more efficient and cost effective, maximising expertise in certain areas and to change the name of the organisation to Midlands Emergency Healthcare NHS Foundation Trust. Public consultation was being undertaken from 1st November 2010 to 6th February 2011 and it was indicated that a report would be published on the outcome of the consultation.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the presentation on the West Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust consultation with Local Authority Groups, be noted.

**DUDLEY GROUP OF HOSPITALS FOUNDATION TRUST
MEMBERSHIP AND ORGAN DONATION**

Councillor Steve Waltho gave a brief presentation on the Dudley Group of Hospitals Foundation Trust Membership and indicated that the public had the opportunity to join local Hospital Trusts. Membership was free and there were essentially three levels of membership. The first entailed receiving a newsletter, the second involved going on hospital visits and the third was the Governorship level, which currently comprised of thirty nine members. The meeting were informed that forms were available for anyone that wished to become a Member.

Councillor Steve Waltho then gave a brief presentation on organ donation and in doing so explained that three people a day died awaiting a transplant. There were nearly 8000 people, of which 69 were from the Dudley area, that were currently awaiting a life-changing transplant. He explained that there were nearly 18 million people that had joined the Organ Donor register and that 86,500 of those were from the Dudley area. He urged more people to register for organ donation and indicated that forms were available for those that were interested.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the presentation on the Dudley Group of Hospitals Foundation Trust Membership and information on Organ Donation, be noted.

**NIMMINGS ROAD AREA, SHELL CORNER : PROPOSED TRAFFIC
REGULATION ORDERS**

(Having declared a personal and prejudicial interest Councillors Taylor and Turner withdrew from the meeting and rejoined the meeting following its consideration).

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the outcome of further consultations in relation to Traffic Regulation Order proposals for Shell Corner, Halesowen.

The Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) reported that an investigation had been completed regarding traffic regulation opportunities to reduce traffic hold ups in the Shell Corner area and to make vehicle movements and car parking more conducive to people living and working in that area. Additional consultation had also taken place with Members and the petition organiser.

Members indicated that concerns had been raised about traffic congestion and also that there could be an increase in the speed of traffic due to Green Lane and Clement Road becoming one way and it was requested that the roads be monitored for safety aspects. The Group Engineer (Traffic and Road Safety) undertook to monitor the situation.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet Member for Transportation be recommended to approve proposals as set out in paragraph 5 of the report submitted, and modified, as appropriate, as follows:-

Proposal numbers 4B, 7B, 8B and 13, as set out in the report submitted in relation to double yellow lines and limited waiting in Long Lane, Malt Mill Lane and Nimmings Road, double yellow lines in Nimmings Road, Green Lane and Masters Lane, double yellow lines in Nimmings Road, Fairfield Road, Douglas Road and Birch Drive and one way traffic flow in Green Lane and Clement Road.

REGENERATION OF CRADLEY/WINDMILL HILL

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on the potential for a more radical approach to the regeneration of Cradley/Windmill Hill local centre. A plan showing the development site and the extent of possible highway improvement was also circulated.

A question was asked querying whether air quality in the Colley Gate (on the A458) area had worsened since bus stops were filled in. The Environmental Protection Manager undertook to respond direct to the questioner concerned.

A Member commented that there had been little action in progressing the problem with air quality in the Cradley/Windmill Hill area and that the situation was worsened as there was nowhere for buses to pull in to enable vehicles to move quicker and to overtake.

A Member commented that there were various action plans contained in the Appendix to the report submitted and that the Area Committee should endorse those actions and it was further suggested that the report be referred to the Select Committee on the Environment and the Select Committee on Health and Adult Social Care due to environmental and health impacts.

In response to a query the Assistant Director, Economic Regeneration and Transportation confirmed that the LIFT Scheme was still being explored in the area and that a suitable site had to be identified.

RESOLVED

- (1) That the progress made in delivering the Regeneration Plan, be noted.
- (2) That continued efforts to bring forward development sites with partner developers and landowners, be supported.
- (3) That the consultation taking place for the Air Quality Action Plan, be noted.
- (4) That the actions detailed in the Air Quality Action plan designed to improve air quality within the Dudley Metropolitan Borough for the future, be supported.

72

HALESOWEN TOWN CENTRE DEVELOPMENT

A report of the Director of the Urban Environment was submitted on progress with regard to physical developments taking place in and around Halesowen Town Centre.

RESOLVED

That the information contained in the report, on progress with regard to developments in and around Halesowen Town Centre, be noted.

73

EARLS HIGH SCHOOL FOUNDATION – FINAL ACCOUNTS

A report of the Treasurer was submitted on the accounts and annual returns of the Earls High School Foundation Trust. A statement of accounts for the trust was attached as Appendix 1 to the report submitted.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to the accounts of the Trust, on behalf of the Council, by the Committee in their capacity as Trustees and that the Chairman be authorised to sign the accounts on behalf of the Committee.

74

DELEGATED CAPITAL BUDGET

A report of the Area Liaison Officer was submitted on a request for funding from the Delegated Capital Budget.

RESOLVED

That approval be given to a grant of £5000 being made to 2nd Cradley and St Peters Scouts towards the installation of secure lockable entrance door with wheelchair access, secure lockable fire exit door and secure steel fencing to the rear of the property.

75

DATES AND VENUES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

RESOLVED

That the date and venue of the next meeting of the Committee be noted as follows:-

9th March, 2011 – Lutley Community Centre

76

SELECT COMMITTEE PUBLICITY

As a way of giving additional publicity to meetings of the Council's Select Committees, details of Select Committee meetings had been included on the agendas of meetings of Area Committees.

The information given in respect of publicity for future meetings of Select Committees was noted.

The meeting ended at 8.10 pm.

CHAIRMAN